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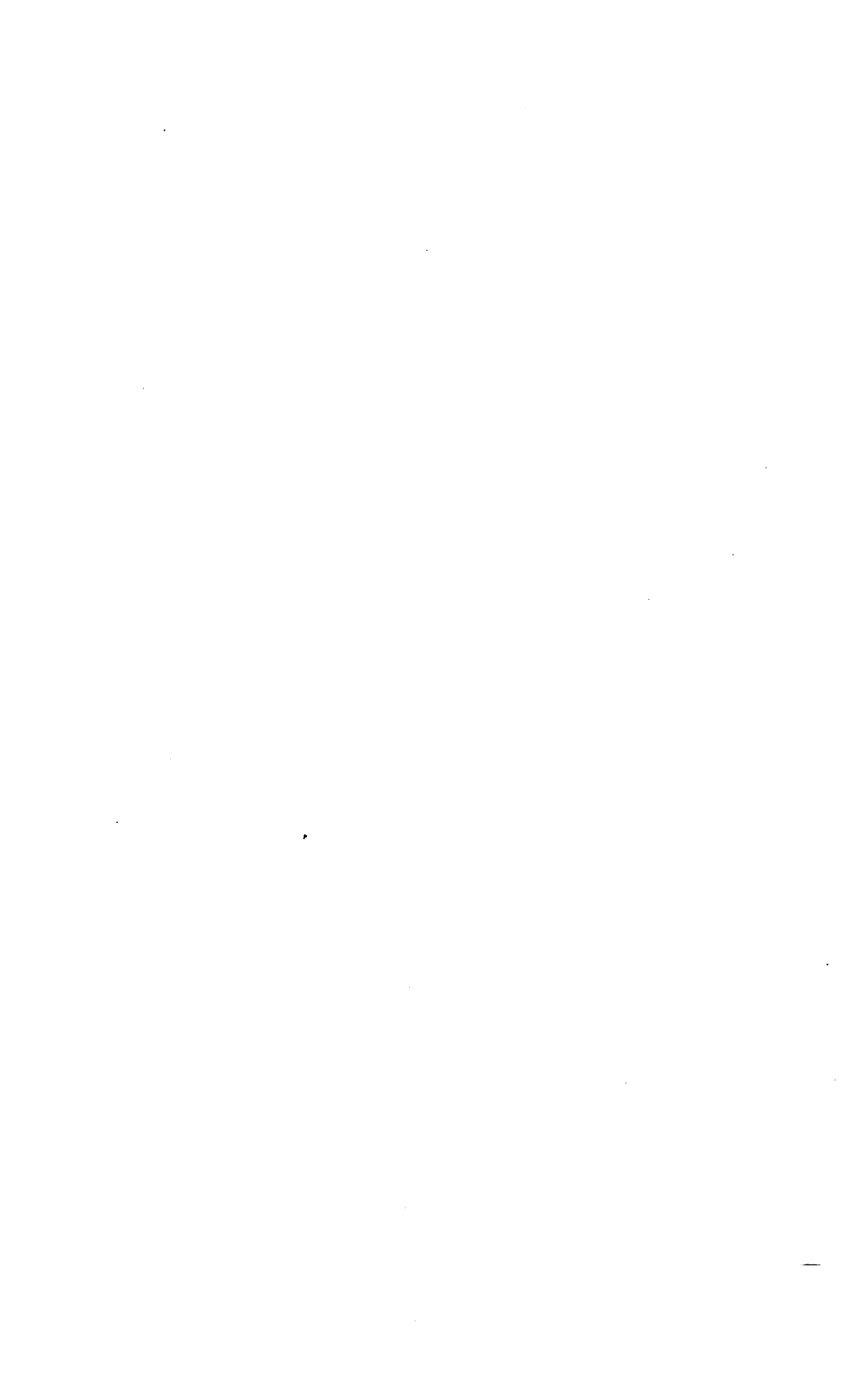
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PROTESTANTISM

IN THE

Middle of the Nineteenth Century.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

OF

SAMUEL M. HOPKINS,

PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY, &c., AUBURN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.



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REV. S. M. HOPKINS,

DEAR SIR : At a Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Auburn Theological Seminary, the undersigned were appointed a Committee to request a copy of your Inaugural Address, delivered to-day, for publication. We make the request with sincere satisfaction, and hope it may be consistent with your views of duty to grant it.

Very Respectfully,

JAMES B. SHAW,
HENRY A. NELSON,
F. STARR.

To Rev. S. M. HOPKINS, Prof. Eccles. Hist., &c.

JAN 19 '45

ADDRESS.

It is with much satisfaction, Fathers and Brethren, that, at the close of an annual round of labor with the school over whose interests you watch, I undertake to fulfil the task assigned me a year ago by the Commissioners. The Future rests with God. The Past, with its experiences, its acquisitions, and its honest endeavors, is our own. We may thank God and take courage, if we find that any such moderate and reasonable success as might fairly have been hoped for, has attended our efforts. With something of trial, and with much of mercy and Divine help we have been brought through to the end of the year. The end of the year brings us very near the close of the first half of the XIXth century; and in view of the great events affecting the progress of Christianity in Europe, that have occurred since we last met for these anniversary services, I have thought we might appropriately turn our attention at this time, to the attitude and prospects of Protestantism just at this period of the world's history. I do not propose any detailed notice of the last year's events referred to. They are familiar to all the readers of current periodical literature. Their significance does not consist in the establishment of any good political organization in Europe on a permanent basis. It does not consist in the downfall of those despotic sovereigns who were allied with the Papacy. It does not even consist in the very extraordinary and unprecedented catastrophe that has befallen the Papacy itself. It will not be neutralized by temporary reactions or temporary successful efforts of Despotism to rivet the broken chain. It consists in the evidence of a strong common sympathy

throughout a large part of Europe in favor of constitutional government—in a more thorough waking up of the masses to a sense of their strength—in the marked progress in the popular mind towards just ideas in respect to all those things in which Papal States differ, to their own hurt, from Protestant. The nations of Europe have not been asleep during these last twenty years. The highest aspirations of liberalism in 1830 were for a popular monarchy, surrounded with republican institutions—hereditary monarchy still. They have got beyond all that, this time. It takes people, bred in the school of absolutism, a great while to find out that after all this world was *not* made for Cæsar; when they *do*, they will not easily forget it. Since we were last met all Europe has rung from side to side with the sound of the warlike tools with which the nations were putting up the scaffolding for a genuine Republicanism.

It will easily be admitted that to find a more significant year we must either look forwards, or else some ways behind us. It cannot claim indeed to stand for the commencement of an era; but it is one of those very decisive periods in the progress of an era which develop new forces and indicate more clearly the direction things are taking. The scale dips at once with a more positive inclination. The moving mass reaches a point where it plunges forward with an impulse that makes wide and sudden prostration of obstacles. New materials come in to swell the aggregate; and a continent, with all its thrones, jars and trembles to the progress of the ruin.

In these latter days in which it is our happiness to live, the tide of events necessarily pours along with increasing volume. It is like some great river approaching the ocean. Every year in the future must be eventful. The time grows short. Causes that have been collecting their might in pent up silence, now explode with shattering energy. Results crowd thick upon each other. We have reached the Saturday evening of the world—the later hours of the day of preparation, and the Sabbath draws on. In the time that remains there are great changes to be effected in the economy of this hu-

man habitation—displacements, replacements—overthrow and construction : and these changes are to be wrought, not by any new agencies, but only by the invigoration and concentrated energy of powers already in operation. The forces between which the last great struggle is to take place are drawn out. The great antagonisms Christianity is ever to encounter are in the field. The Church, the press, the ministry, the Bible, the school, all the native and all the allied strength of Protestantism is arrayed ; and the events of the last year have opened a field for their operation in Europe which barriers, like the gates of Hell, have heretofore closed.

What is Protestantism ? Simply Christianity purged from the corruptions of the Romish Church : the religion of the Bible, drawn from the Bible, and rejecting every thing that is not contained in, or by necessary inference, deduced from the Bible. It is the name by which Christianity is designated in its relation to the Romish system—just as what is in ordinary speech called the Bible is distinctively called canonical Scripture. When we say Bible we mean God's revelation of his will to man : when we say canonical Scripture we mean the Bible as discriminated from those apocryphal Scriptures which the Church of Rome has intruded into the Sacred Volume.

Protestantism has one relation to Romish Christianity, and another to every other false religious system extant. Existing Paganism, for example, is only the dead shell of the old colossal superstitions that have for centuries suffocated the human mind. Paganism is never aggressive. It has no spring or vitality to lead it out towards foreign conquest. It can make no attempt to retaliate its losses upon Christianity. Paganism is the mere inert mass upon which Christianity has to operate—the field for Christian enterprise ; but like a field long neglected and given over to nature, making a dead, heavy, passive resistance to regeneration.

Islamism, for nine hundred years the terror and scourge of a corrupt Church, has long lost its elasticity. Starting with the simple assertion of the unity and spirituality of God, and the divine mission of his apostle, sent to restore this lost truth

to mankind, the religion of Mohammed grew in one generation into a formidable adversary to the religion of the Empire. It was not merely the terror of the sword that recommended the Koran; it was the simplicity and comparative purity of its theology and worship. It was better to believe in one God whose prophet was Mohammed, than it was to believe in a God whose mother held over him the rod of authority—who tamely consented to divide the worship of His creatures, and leave more than a just part of Heaven to the favorite demi-gods of the Church. It was better to worship towards the Caaba than to worship in temples defiled with idolatrous symbols and ceremonies: and the pilgrimage to Mecca was, in every respect, as favorable to morals, to civilization, and to piety, as the pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulcher.

So bald an imposture as that of Mohammed, unsupported even by the pretense of a miracle, never could have shot up into portentous dimensions unless favored by the degradation of the dominant faith. The religion of the Koran, we are to remember, proceeded on the acknowledged truth of both Judaism and Christianity. It was neither Paganism nor Infidelity; it was Islam—*devotion* to the spiritual worship of God, with honor to those eminent prophets, Moses and Jesus. Mohammed, so far from being an enemy to Christ, was his lineal successor—the Paraclete He had promised to send for the better instruction of his people; and this instruction the corrupt state of Christianity required should take the shape of vigorous compulsory reform. Against a purer faith and a worship more worthy of God, Islam could have made no head. An evangelical Christianity would have given no occasion to its fanaticism; or would have met that fanaticism, when roused, by a hatred of idolatry as earnest as its own—by as fervent a piety—by as simple a worship—and by a genuine benevolence which would have effectually disarmed it. God made use of it to protect the infancy of just such a Christianity in the West, when it had buried under the ruins of Constantinople the corrupt Christianity of the East. The Turk in the XVIth century more than once saved the Gospel from the Pope. It

was the waving horsetails and clashing cymbals of the great Ottoman Pashas, pressing towards Vienna, that broke off the designs of the enemies of the Reformation. God held these mailed and helmeted locusts in his hands on the frontiers of Europe, and let them forth on the empire whenever the dragon roared too fiercely against the Church. Having accomplished these ends by the Ottoman power, God cast it away to wither. Islam has made no conquests, nor scarce any attempts at conquest, since that time. Even the despicable character of oriental Christianity has no power to revive its original spirit of reform. It lies mainly passive for the reception of influences from Christian lands.

Both Heathenism and Islam, in short, are simply unchristian. Romanism is anti-christian. All other systems of belief are worn out, and have lost their hold on the popular mind. This rears itself up with the old dragon malignity against the Church of God. The struggle, as between active opposing elements, is confined to Christianity and Popery; and Popery concentrates in itself the venom of all the other unchristian systems—the godless idolatry, and the Christless reliance upon rites and penances, and a priesthood characteristic of Paganism—the fanatical propagandist zeal of the Moslem,—and the bitter intelligent hate of Infidelity against the peculiarities of the Gospel system. Popery is simply Infidelity, with the sword which Islamism brandished in the right hand, and the image which Islamism trod upon in the left.

The great religious war, ending with the peace of Westphalia, just two hundred years ago, terminated the active struggle between Christianity and Romanism, which had begun with the Reformation. One hundred and thirty years, therefore, after Luther began to preach, Popery and Protestantism sat down by the side of each other in Europe, with the line of division strongly and permanently drawn between them. The latter had run its career for the time, and after passing through a series of bloody persecutions and desolating wars, gave up the idea of further aggression upon the domains of Rome. Rome, baffled after every effort, gave up the idea

of extirpating Christianity by force. The treaty of Westphalia adjusted the balance of power between the Protestant and Catholic States of Europe. In the two hundred years that have elapsed since then, no State, if we except France during the Revolution, has changed its relations to the Romish See. No State since then has abolished the celebration of mass. No one has wholly renounced obedience to the Pope.

The reasons why Protestantism, so salient at first, stopped at this point, are as instructive as they are obvious. Rome had left as her testamentary curse upon the nations from which she withdrew a deep-seated conviction of the necessary union between the ecclesiastical and the civil power. The early Protestants, who had been educated in Romish ideas, never thought of questioning the right and duty of the magistrate to defend the Church; to appoint and salary its teachers; to discourage or destroy its enemies. The magistrate himself had just as little doubt respecting the extent of his own prerogatives. The result was that Protestantism everywhere became political. It was embraced or rejected by States as such; and that one State admitted the Reformation was a reason why another State should exclude it. Especially when the nations embracing opposite sides of the great dispute had become inflamed by mutual suspicions and injuries; when a religious war of unexampled duration and atrocity had left them exhausted, breathless, but unsated with revenge, it became unavoidable that both Romanism and the Reformation should sit down in intrenched camps, aiming at nothing further for the time than self-preservation.

Indeed, though it was only after the close of the Thirty Years' war that the spent combatants finally desisted from the struggle, yet nearly a century earlier the line between Papal and Protestant Europe was drawn very much as it has remained up to the present day. In less than fifty years after Luther published his Theses against indulgences, the States of Europe had made their choice, and finally taken sides for or against the dominant Church. By the year 1560, or a little after, it was clear what Rome had lost in the great uprising,

and what she had been able still to retain. The tide which had threatened to sweep over Europe and prostrate the Papal throne itself was stayed ; but the Papacy was left a shattered wreck ; half of Switzerland and more than half of Germany gone ; the rising northern powers, Denmark and Sweden, lost ; England and Scotland lost ; the vigorous Protestant republic of Holland created by the Reformation ; France, though her kings remained the slaves of Rome, was filled with the Presbyteries and Synods of the reformed ; Spain and Italy oscillated towards Protestantism, and were only saved by the prompt vigor with which the Pope flung into the scale the sword of the mercenary and the faggot of the inquisitor.

In general the northern nations belonging to the great Saxon family embraced the Reformation ; and the Celtic races of the south, after more or less of a struggle, maintained their allegiance to the Romish See. And yet it is not true that the line of religious division coincided so strictly with the ethnological line as to give any strong support to the idea that the power of appreciating the simple Gospel is at all connected with peculiarities of race. True Christianity is a religion for mankind in all their families, and is no less suited to the passionate, imaginative Celt than to the calmer, more resolute and persevering Tedescan. Mr. Macaulay thinks it "a most significant circumstance that no large society of which the tongue is not Teutonic has ever turned Protestant ; and that, wherever a language derived from that of ancient Rome is spoken, the religion of modern Rome to this day prevails."* But this circumstance loses much of its significance when it is remembered that the nations of Northern Europe, who, with the exception of the Irish, belonged to the Teutonic family, had special reasons, political, financial, and historical, for renouncing their subjection to Rome ; and that the southern nations, who were generally Celtic, had corresponding reasons for maintaining it. For example, the political interests of the Germanic States ; the need of some strong common sympathy to unite them for mutual protection

* History, vol. I, p. 63.

against the emperor; their growing impoverishment by the insatiable greediness of the Romish See; the recollection of the ancient struggle in which their monarchs had engaged against the arrogant pontiffs of the eleventh and twelfth centuries; their national antipathy to the degenerate Italians; and the circumstance of the Reformation originating among themselves in a man of the people, all inclined them strongly to join in the revolt against the Catholic Church. The Germans at the beginning of the sixteenth century could count up their *centum gravamina*—their list of the hundred intolerable wrongs they were enduring from the church and the clergy.

On the other hand, the Celtic races occupying the southern peninsulas of Europe had special reasons for adhering to the Romish See, entirely unconnected with their ethnographic relations. At the period of the Reformation, the Spaniard, for instance, had been for centuries confronting as the advanced guard of Christendom the two great sections of misbelievers, the Jew and the Saracen. His national pride had come to be identified with his position as an "old Catholic"—an unimpeachable son of the Church, free from any suspicion of unbelieving or misbelieving attainder. The great imperial bulwark of the faith, Charles V, was his own king. The great Papal engine for the rooting out of heretical pravity was born and domiciled in Spain. The familiars of the Holy Office thronged in Valladolid and Seville, where the German plague first began to break out. Spain, in fact, more than any other nation, stood armed at all points for the prompt suppression of heresy. Accordingly, though the revived Christianity of the sixteenth century gained a footing and for a while ran like fire, it was nowhere; not even in the Pontifical States, so speedily and so thoroughly crushed as in Spain.

The case of the Irish, however, as a northern people, who in the great schism stood by their southern Celtic relations, might seem to give considerable color to the idea of the predominant influence of family in religion. But there were reasons peculiar to themselves why the Irish should adhere to

the Church of Rome. They were barbarous and ignorant beyond any other European people. They shared in none of the influences of the revival of learning in the fifteenth century. There was no Irish scholar to stand by the side of Erasmus ; no theologian to mate with Cajetan or Melancthon ; no preacher like Zuingle or Bernardo Ochino. There was no liberal-minded Irish traveler to do the office Patrick Hamilton did for Scotland ; to catch a spark from Wittemburg or Zurich, and bear it back to light up the Emerald Isle. The great men of Ireland who shone as lights in the world had belonged to an earlier age, and had set during the darkest portion of the mediæval period. She had no translation of the Scriptures. She had no trade or intercourse with other nations. She had no universities like those of Leipsic and Paris, to serve as lenses for collecting and distributing the rays of science.

These moral causes were sufficient of themselves to render it certain that Ireland could not march abreast of Saxony and Scotland in the career of Reformation.

It is to be noticed also that Ireland had little of that experience of the oppressive and demoralizing character of the Romish system which made other States welcome the notes of spiritual freedom. Among any rude and poor people Romanism appeared comparatively to advantage. The priesthood and monastic orders were filled from the children of the soil, because there was nothing to tempt greedy Italians to swarm in and devour the substance of the land. The priests being poor were more generally than elsewhere virtuous. The rapacious mendicancy and spoliation of the Church of Rome found no room for development. Ireland having nothing to lose, could not be plundered. In the larger British kingdom, on the other hand, an alien priesthood of a very low grade of moral character ; an unceasing exaction of gold, under one pretence or another, by all orders of Papal ecclesiastics, were felt as some of the heaviest grievances of the Roman domination. In such States as Ireland and the rude forest cantons of Switzerland these grievances went out

for want of fuel. Romanism put on a kindly, humane, and moral aspect by the force of a very disagreeable necessity.

But in addition to this there was a political reason, which is operating with undiminished vigor at the present day, to repel the Irish from embracing the Reformation. In the twelfth century an English Pope gave Ireland to the Normans; "For Erin fair," to quote from one of our own prophets more deservedly honored for statesmanship and fearless advocacy of right than for the vision and faculty divine—

"For Erin fair it was by all agreed
Did to His Holiness the Pope belong:
Nor was there mortal dared dispute the creed,
St. Peter's keys had made the title strong;
And Constantine had granted him by deed
All islands; so 'twas broad as it was long:
Of both the grants she fell within the scope—
Fee simple to His Holiness the Pope."*

So Adrian gave Ireland to King Henry the Second; and this act introduced that inveterate struggle between the races which is breaking out afresh in fire and blood with each succeeding generation. The side of the Reformation was embraced by their English invaders. Protestantism was the religion of the Saxon. This was enough to make it detested by the hunted victim of sword law, who came naturally to regard Protestant and oppressor as identical terms. Celtiberian as they were, had the Irish possessed equal culture with the Scotch, and suffered only a common misgovernment with the English, there is no reason to doubt that they would have thrown themselves with characteristic energy into the great religious movement of the age.

In addition to this it is to be observed that all the States of the Teutonic family did not join the party of the Reformation; nor all the communities speaking a tongue derived from the ancient Roman adhere to the Romish Church. Bavaria, Austria, and the Waldstette of Switzerland remained among the staunchest servants of the Papacy. On the other hand,

* Dermot McMorrogh, Canto.

the Waldenses, who in the sixteenth century spoke Italian and now speak French, were evangelical before the Reformation. In France, before the massacre of St. Bartholomew, there were two thousand organized Presbyterian churches; and it is perfectly certain that but for the summary violence which destroyed the infant reformation in Italy, a large portion of that peninsula would have broken off from the See of Rome. It was not, in short, that the genius of the southern nations of Europe made a pompous and ritual religion peculiarly suitable to them; not that their Celtic blood unfitted them to appreciate a pure Gospel; but that these nations lay more within the scope of that "devilish enginery" which Rome had at command for crushing a nascent heresy. Had Rome been in Germany, the Reformation might have started up in Tuscany or Naples; and Wittenburg might have sent forth her Ecks, Cajetans, and Bellarmines to champion the cause of the Pope.

Still it is generally true, with the exceptions stated, that, drawing a line through Europe nearly coincident with the fiftieth parallel of latitude, the Catholic States north of that line joined the Reformation, and those south of it adhered to the Romish Church. This line was firmly drawn at the conclusion of the Thirty Years' war, and has remained without variation since. No State south of Bavaria has for two hundred years abandoned Catholicism. No State north of it has abandoned the Reformation. But it would be a great error to infer from this that the balance of strength between Protestantism and Popery stands just as it did in 1648. The Reformation has grown stronger and the Romish system has grown weaker by all that society has gained of knowledge and experience since that time; by all the influence of successful colonization, of successful self-government, of more general education, of an improved art of printing, of vastly increased facilities for travel and intercommunication. Two hundred years ago France, rising to the zenith of her strength, was just coming under the government of a most formidable and absolute monarch, bigoted in his attachment to the Rom-

ish Church, and who afterwards regarded it as the glory of his reign to have crushed and driven from his kingdom a million of his Protestant subjects. France has just now retaliated this treatment upon a comparatively harmless and constitutional monarch, one great cause of whose ruin was that he was too much governed by his wife, who was too much governed by the Roman Catholic clergy.

In 1648, Spain, the most fanatical of Catholic States, still presented an imposing aspect of strength. That great chain of tropical islands where she has now but a slight and precarious footing was then mostly her own. Half of the territory now included within the limits of our own confederacy was hers. All central and equatorial South America was hers. Her huge galleons, freighted with the treasures of the new world, breasted the Atlantic billows, yet unscared by the thunders of Blake and of Anson. Spain is now the basest of kingdoms; degraded and impoverished by the Church to which she has clung, and perfectly insignificant in the diplomacy or in the arms of Europe. The loftiest flight of her enterprise during the half century has been her late characteristic loan of Spanish bayonets to force back the Papal despotism on the people of Rome.

England in 1648 was just entering upon the commonwealth and the Protectorate; that great period when she stood at the head of the Protestant political interest, and awed the bigot princes of the continent into toleration. With all her faults, England is now far more pervadingly Protestant—more imbued with the power of true Christianity than she was in the seventeenth century. And now by the side of Great Britain stands America, the most thoroughly Protestant nation on the face of the earth, unpolluted by a religious establishment or a single disqualifying religious statute; and, together with England, exerting a more active influence in sowing the seeds of future changes, and putting life into the inert mass of the human mind, than the whole community of civilized nations beside. In 1648, this vigorous Protestant nation, whose citizens are now found in the forefront of en-

terprise wherever man can find subsistence, and whose name is a passport in the four quarters of the earth, was mainly represented by three small colonies between the Connecticut river and the ocean, whose chief worldly anxiety was to protect their rude home from the torch of the savage.

Looking then at the balance of strength between Protestantism and Romanism, so far as States are concerned, we find that Rome can count upon that meagre shadow of a once great name, Spain ; upon Naples, one-sixth of whose population consists of Romish ecclesiastics—a State which moves the disgust and derision of all the rest of Europe ; upon France, simply so far as the rulers of France for the time being think it profitable to play the part of good Catholics ; upon Austria, so far as that great carcass, about which the eagles are fast gathering, can help or hurt anything ; upon Belgium, perhaps, and a few other insignificant European kingdoms.

On the other side are all those continental States which, at the close of the Thirty Years' war, were left permanently alienated from the Romish Church, and which, though little imbued with vital Christianity, are still as decidedly Protestant in their policy as they were two hundred years ago. To these are to be added England and America, the two nations which are now influencing the destinies of mankind more than all continental Europe together ; whose commercial marine exceeds that of the civilized world beside, and who hold in their hands, under God, the destinies of the uncivilized nations. Sink Spain, Belgium, and Austria, like Sodom, entombing all their wealth and influence, their armies and navies, their men of political and religious activity, and scarce a ripple would break on the shores of Asia, Africa, or Oceanica to bear the tidings. But strike Protestant England out of existence, and there is not a port nor sea-board nation but would reel under the catastrophe ; a gloom like the dimness of an eclipse would go swiftly darkening over the waters, and the shadow fall back ten degrees on the dial that marks the stages of human progress.

There is one other striking point of contrast. In 1648, that great society which had been raised up expressly to do battle with the Reformation, had just begun to decline from its primitive energy. Jesuit teachers directed the studies of educated youth in all the Catholic States of Europe. Jesuit confessors directed the consciences of all Catholic princes. Jesuit missionaries were laboring with extraordinary energy and perseverance amid the forests of South America, under the withering sun of India, by the banks of the Hoang Ho and the St. Lawrence. The order of Loyola had still a full century to run before the nations should rise up against it for the first time, and compel the Roman pontiff himself to lock the door on this hydra-headed abomination; and this at a time when not one Protestant institution of any sort existed for the diffusion of Christianity.* What are the Jesuits now? A name of contempt and hatred throughout Europe; the staunch "oarsmen of St. Peter's bark" (as the Pope loved to call them), whose careful pilotage and indefatigable zeal has fairly set the ship within the swing of the Maelstrom; whose fidelity has been more disastrous to Rome than the enmity of all Protestantism. The Jesuits of the sixteenth century, aided by the unhappy dissensions among Protestants themselves, arrested the Reformation in mid career, and hurled it back from the slope of the Alps and the Pyrenees.

Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him
Eyeless at Gaza, in the mill with slaves.

Feared and hated for his invincible spirit of intrigue and plotting; for his notorious alliance with despotism, and his labors in the work of counter-revolution, the Jesuit finds no civilized State, properly so called, where he can show his head except this, the great home of a pure and genuine Protestantism.

So much for the numerical strength of the Protestant and

* The Society for Diffusing the Gospel in Foreign Parts, the first English missionary institution, received a charter from Charles the Second, in 1662.

the Papal divisions of the world. And now if we ask for the vital power and resources of the two religious systems, we find the Church of Rome relying as of old upon her means of impressing the imagination and imposing upon the judgment, while she tempts the natural heart with a way of salvation which is the very reflection of itself. Unbroken prescription as opposed to novelty; unity contrasted with variation, and an authority in matters of faith which dispenses with all inquiry and forbids all doubt, constitute the great boast of the Papal church. On the other hand, Protestantism has the strength of reason as against authority, of liberty against prescription, and of a vital unity against a dead mechanical uniformity. Undoubtedly the spectacle of one great united Church, with an acknowledged visible center of unity, would have in it something imposing and calculated to awe superficial observation. It is a pleasant and profitable theme for Romanists to dwell on; but a little acquaintance with the actual character and history of the Church of Rome dissipates the illusion. The great and terrible image seen by Nebuchadnezzar in vision would no doubt have been, if actually existing in *rerum natura*, a very imposing object. Bearing the human form in colossal proportions, the head blazing with gold, the breast and arms dazzling the sight with reflected silver, it might have seemed to a spectator at a little distance the very ideal of grandeur and symmetry and compact articulation. But a closer view would have shown that the body was of a baser metal than the breast and arms; that the legs were iron, and the feet part iron and part clay, substances not blending with each other, nor forming a solid mass by interfusion, but simply in contact without coalescence, maintained in apparent union by pressure, and ready to fall apart when any sufficient shock should smite between the discordant materials.

The unity which the Romish communion boasts, and which she makes the first and principal mark of the true Church, is a unity that will bear no examination; that frowns on liberty and takes away the key of knowledge. The variations in the great body of evangelical Protestantism are variations that

consist with a common appeal to Scripture as the sole and sufficient Rule of Faith ; that concern chiefly the lesser matters of rites or of polity, and that operate as provocatives to joint or several efforts for the diffusion of pure Christianity. With partial and temporary exceptions they make no schism in the body. They invest the Church of Christ with a robe of many colors, but they leave the garment unrent. Such variations are better than an outward mechanical unity. They are the offspring of freedom : they are the nurse of charity : they are the friends of human progress.

Why should not Pius IX have improved a portion of his learned leisure at Gaeta, in enlightening the Romans respecting the variations of constitutional government ? It would not be difficult for so ingenious a Pontiff to draw a tolerably unflattering portrait of the community of free States. Look at your boasted Republics, he might say. Since you have cast loose from wholesome restraint, you are driving about on a sea of experiment, no two of you taking the same course. You have no common political chart ; you seem to agree only in your hatred of a vigorous Patriarchal Absolutism. Some of you are governed by Presidents ; some by military Dictators ; and some by Triumvirs. Some States have two legislative bodies ; others but one. Some unite the Legislative and Judicial functions ; others separate them. Some of your pretended free States are the great maintainers of domestic oppression. Some concede universal suffrage : others restrict the rights of citizenship to the wealthy and privileged few. Besides these constitutional variations, you have no sooner broken loose from your legitimate, heaven-appointed keepers, than you begin to prey upon each other. The strong natural appetite of Republics for conquest and plunder breaks out among you. Your swords are already at each other's throats. Such contradictions of your great principles, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, prove your notion of self-government a delusion. Abandon, then, your impious revolutionary attitude. Bow your necks meekly under the paternal yoke of Despotism, and be happy.

This may not seem very conclusive against Liberty ; but

it is just as conclusive as the celebrated argument of that great but dishonest writer, Bossuet, against Protestantism. The Roman people would, I imagine, be very little at a loss for an answer. It is true (they might say) that Despotism is one and uniform, and that Liberty is multiform, according to the variety of circumstances under which she grows up. It is true that her development is far from being in all cases as harmonious and healthy as might be desired: it is true that scarce any two of us agree in the details of our organization; but we are all agreed in one thing; that the masses were not born to be slaves either to kings or priests; that the power necessary to administer government resides originally, under God, in the people; and that government is instituted for the benefit of the people, and not for the benefit of the rulers. Having an eye to the fruitful consequences of these propositions, we conclude that our diversity is enough better than your uniformity. We had rather be driven by the healthy gales of freedom on a sea of experimental self-government than to lie like rotting hulks, moored head and stern in the Tiber, under the careful supervision of the cannon of St. Angelo.

Whatever may be the immediate political consequences of the agitations in Europe, one thing is clear—that the barriers which have stayed the advance of Protestantism for two hundred years are broken up. A blow has been struck at the power of the Papacy such as it never received in any schism, in any revolution, in any external assault since it had a being. The Roman people rising up against the government of the Church as an intolerable oppression; the successor of Gregory VII and Innocent III flying in a mean disguise at the first note of alarm; the Papal sovereignty declared for ever abolished; the spiritual thunders which once dashed kingdoms to pieces like a potter's vessel, now ridiculed, caricatured by the Pope's own special people; the excommunication carried in ludicrous processions and burned; the Pope blackened in Rome itself with the title of anti-Christ, as freely as ever he was by Luther; and even those who were more moderate only objected that the reproach should fall not so much on the

individual as on the system. "Personally (they said) Pius IX has deserved better of his people. His downfall is rather the judgment of God upon the Papacy whose crimes have for so many centuries cursed all Europe."

This indeed is one of the most encouraging features in the uprising against the Papal rule. Compared with almost any of the long series of despots who have misgoverned the States of the Church, Pius IX was an eminently humane, wise, and virtuous ruler. Had he been like the most of them—not to say the worst—the outbreak would have been imputed to the man. Give them a better Pontiff (it would have been said). Give them Mastai Feretti, and they will sit down contented and hug their chains. But when it is under the mild government of Mastai Feretti himself that the people with extraordinary determination reject the Papal rule, there is no such apology to make. It is the intolerable viciousness of the system that makes it tumble like the French monarchy in the last century, crushing the most respectable and inoffensive of despots under the ruins.

In short, there is freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of worship in all that part of Italy not subject to the King of Naples. There is now again for the first time since the fall of Napoleon, perfect religious toleration in France. There is inevitable toleration at the doors of Spain and Naples. The sword of persecution is broken throughout Europe. Truth and falsehood may once more grapple on equal terms; an ordeal of battle which religion has vainly challenged this thousand years. And now the day long dreaded by spiritual wickedness in high places, and put off as late as possible, HAS COME; when superstition and lies must descend to the arena with naked hands, and stand the issue of an appeal to reason and Scripture.

The futility of any attempt to resuscitate the spirit of Romanism is beginning to be very clear in the events that are passing under our eyes. No intelligent Protestant is ignorant of the energy with which in the half century just closing, the Church of Rome has rallied herself to repair the losses of the century preceding. No one but is aware of the well-directed

and sustained combinations with which in England, in America, on the continent of Europe, she has re-assumed the aggressive against Protestantism. The Jesuits, restored in 1814, after a suppression of near fifty years, started up into fresh vigor, like the earth-born giant from his fall. Great missionary associations for propagating the Faith were established, conducted as all who have read their reports will admit, with consummate ability. The absolute and reactionary governments of Europe conspired to strengthen their own hands by the re-establishment of the Romish Church. Great sums were contributed by religious and political zeal to help on that undertaking. Priests, seminaries, and churches were rapidly multiplied. All this was part of the great movement which has presented Romanism for a while in an attitude so rampant and formidable.

It is beginning now to appear that these seeming signs of a vigorous renascent life, were but the spasmodic struggles that sometimes accompany extreme depletion. The system has been strained to its utmost tension, and the shudder of a near and inevitable collapse passes over it. The whole thing begins to fall in. The kingdoms that lent their power to Rome for this late effort, have been or are being revolutionized. The friendship of the priests dragged down Charles X. The priests largely contributed to the fall of Louis Philippe. The Jesuits caused the humiliating defeat of the Romish Swiss Cantons. They discrowned the King of Bavaria. There has come to be a fatality about an attempt to build up Rome, reminding one of that which attended the setting up the walls and gates of accursed Jericho. And if there were not, the kingdoms of Europe have other interests to occupy them at present, than the propagation of Catholicism. There is scarce a crowned head but sees that his own or his next neighbor's house is on fire. The fortunes that paid a large tribute to the Propaganda, have been ruined by thousands in the late or passing convulsions. The alms that might contribute towards the conversion of heretics, must be diverted in part to maintain his impoverished holiness at Gaeta or Rome. The prestige of liberalism which threw a halo around

Pius IX, a year ago, has all departed. His Italian subjects openly curse him. The most bigoted of our own Catholic population mention him, under their breath, with reproach and mortification.

Romanism is infallibly arrested in Europe. In this country the alarm at first produced by the mass of Catholicism so suddenly poured upon us, has disappeared. In its place has come a cheerful courage—a firm confidence in the power of a free Bible, a free press, and a free pulpit. We have weighed and measured the kingdom of Babylon and found it wanting. There is a power in truth and love to burst through the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder. The Church has settled down upon the conviction, that if true to herself, these millions of Catholic heathen have been sent to us not only to be educated and fed, but to be converted. There is no single particular of her whole appliances, in which when set down, in a Protestant land like this, under the eye of a fearless unshackled press, under the light of a widely diffused intelligence, within the scope of an earnest practical ministry, confronted with all those influences to which Protestantism has given birth,—there is no single particular in which the Romish system is not insufferably damaged by the collision.

On the basis of these facts, we may confidently anticipate the resumption of the march of Protestant Christianity throughout the civilized world. Two centuries and more of arrest may seem long; but it is not long to Him with whom a thousand years are as one day. It is not so long as He left His chosen people for their discipline and culture in Egypt. It is not so long as the period during which he was gradually bringing about the fulness of times for the manifestation of the Redeemer. It is not as long as the centuries during which he withheld the art of Printing and the discovery of a new Continent as antecedents to the Reformation. During these two hundred years the Most High, who is not slack concerning His promise, has been, in accordance with the invariable plan of His administration, accumulating those forces which, when developed, are to act with wide and sudden energy.

These forces are found—

I. In the increased harmony and union among Protestants. It cannot be denied that with all our substantial agreement respecting the vitalities of the Christian system, our uncharitable dealing about lesser matters has beyond measure scandalized the Protestant cause. The right of private judgment, which we all boast as against the claim that Fathers and Councils should interpret Scripture for us, has betrayed us into magnifying beyond all just proportion our several peculiarities. It has not been enough that we should speak the same language to be recognized as fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God. We must speak the same dialect. There is no allowance for theological provincialisms. We have too much taken the different aspects which the great truths of Christianity present as viewed from different positions for the insignia of hostile camps. This is like making the wheat-sheaf (*shibboleth*), which should be an emblem of peace and plenty, the password by a fortress or a river. The man of Judah or Benjamin said *Shibboleth*, and went free. The Ephraimite said *Sibboleth*, and the sword of execution fell on his neck.

“When Jephthah's prowess quell'd their pride
In that sore battle where so many died
Without reprieve condemned to death
For want of well pronouncing *Shibboleth*.”

So one Evangelical Christian pronounces Bishop or Baptism, Sin or Grace, with an accent which any alien from the commonwealth of Israel could scarce distinguish from our own, and we draw out the sword and stop the way with a challenge of distrust or of defiance. It has not been enough that there was one body: there must be one costume. The possession of one spirit in common is no good argument for harmony, unless that spirit utter itself in identical terms in all parts of the Church. One Lord, one faith, one common hope—this has presented a less stringent motive to union than two politics, two ceremonies, two philosophies of theology have for separation.

Pudet haec opprobria dici
Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refulli.

Happily we have a refutation at hand. The large increase of charity and mutual helpfulness among Christians which has characterized the last quarter of a century has shown that those who were at odds are still brethren. The threatening attitude of a common enemy have led Christians of different names to look more at their harmony and less at their disagreements. Parties among men who love their common country serve, in times of peace, to guard the equilibrium of freedom. In the day of trial the partizan is merged in the patriot. If this look like aggregating Christians on the basis not of a mutual love but merely of a common hostility, I reply that the common danger serves to bring out in relief their actual harmony. The points about which they agree *are* unspeakably greater and more vital than those about which they differ; and an assault on the common salvation reminds them of it. It is no time to dispute sharply about the nature of Baptism when it comes to be a question whether you shall have any Scriptural sacrament left you or not. The controversy respecting the Perseverance of the Saints may be adjourned when, a desperate Anti-Christian rally is made to strike away the very ground-work of a sinner's hopes.

This urgency is recognized in all those undertakings in which Protestants are working together or working harmoniously, side by side, to push out falsehood by filling the world with truth; and this has developed an elasticity and power of expansion in Protestant Christianity heretofore unparalleled. Catholic piety at its best estate was a poor motive power compared with a true reverence for Christ's commands, and a true love to the souls for whom He died. The Jesuit was a mere fool compared with the Christian missionary. He built on foundations that could not possibly last; on popular ignorance, credulity and prejudice. The Romish priest could not preach the Gospel, not knowing what it was. He could not circulate the Scriptures. He could not teach in his schools anything that tended to stir and awaken the mind. He could organize no Bible-classes nor Sabbath-schools. He could do nothing in any one almost of the lines of influence that make up the aggressive activity of Protest-

antism. It is hazarding little to say that the work of evangelizing the world is conducted with tenfold the energy and true success by Protestant Christians at the present day that ever attended the efforts of the Church of Rome.

In this condition of things it eminently becomes the duty of all Evangelical Protestants to endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. We have given full play in the very nature of Protestantism to freedom of private judgment. We have followed this up with great industry in building and keeping in repair the division fences between the private judgment which ran north and the private judgment which ran north-west. No doubt Romanism came in like a flood; but we found strong consolation in the fact that this and the other form of Protestantism was kept out. It is true that Purity goes before Peace; but so does Charity by an equal law go before perfect agreement. It is an ill work in these days, for a man to be engaged in magnifying the differences between Christians who hold the same great truths in common. Our contest too often has been that between the bramble and thistle, which should be closest set with a bristly defense. It is our own peculiar felicity to see the time when the main contest between the different parts of the Christian body is that between the vine and the olive which shall be most richly productive; when we can afford to pluck away the ashlar that have been piled between ourselves to build them into the outworks of our common Christianity.

II. The union of the ecclesiastic with the magistrate, which has been so disastrous in its influence on the character of all concerned, which has tended so universally to make one a hypocrite, and both tyrants, and the people slaves, is now plainly doomed. Rome with her usual policy has clung to this adulterous connexion to the last; despotic governments, meaning to bring in superstition to the help of the sword, have paid the Church to amuse and overawe the people. The natural result has been the sentiment, wide spread and deep seated where this corrupt alliance exists, that government is but a conspiracy between the priest and the magistrate to

extinguish the liberties of mankind. An equally natural result has been an intense popular hatred of both the conspirators. The reluctant masses overmatched by their spiritual and their temporal rulers have sat crouching like Issachar between two burdens. But the struggles of Enuladus have been heard below the great pile of state-church oppression. The mountain rocks with his efforts. His breath bursts out in fire and lava. The throne and the confessional tumble into ruin together; and the savage wish of D'Alembert may be substantially very near its accomplishment when the outraged people will take terrible vengeance,

Et des boyaux du dernier Pretre
Serrer le con du dernier Roi.

That the exclusive hierarchal establishments still existing in Europe can permanently stand, is what no one can imagine. They are an inverted pyramid propped up by interested power. The higher clergy clothed in purple and fine linen and faring sumptuously every day, an order of nobility by themselves, at a vast actual remove from the people who directly or indirectly pay the cost; intrusted in the maintenance of abuses, in the strengthening of power; essentially intolerant and persecuting, and mutually using and being used by the State to promote designs hostile to progress; this presents a state of things that cannot last. Men infallibly come to understand the rights of conscience and of worship. They will understand that religion should be cheap and should be free. History will instruct them; successful voluntarism will instruct them; the journalist and popular lecturer will instruct them; and what example and journalism leave incomplete, the tax-gatherer and custom-house officer will no doubt take care to supply. The dominant Established Churches in Europe are too rich to travel safely in these wild times even under the escort of government. It is not forgotten how useful the hoarded wealth of the monasteries proved to the States that embraced the Reformation; what a revenue their suppression brought into Henry VIII; how the confiscated estates of the clergy helped to pay off national debts; what a spring the distribution of so much capital gave to enterprize; and how

much was gained to industry by transubstantiating consuming monks into producing operatives. It will not be forgotten how convenient the Roman republic has found the wealth of the clergy in sustaining itself on the perilous edge between despotism and anarchy.

Other Catholic states have debts to pay ; annihilated commerce to regenerate ; depressed industry to revive ; essential reforms to effect in order to bring themselves anywhere near the line along which free Protestant States are advancing. They cannot fail to see that an established hierarchy in league with hereditary misrule is strangling their energies like the old goblin of the sea on the neck of Sinbad. It is the depressing influence of a bad religious system and a corrupt hierarchy that keeps Spain and Mexico and Naples poor ; that drives away capital, shuts out emigration, discourages industry, and amuses the people like children to keep them from thinking and acting like men.

Let this corrupt system of Church and State alliance fall, and Protestantism asks no more. Her challenge is ever the same which that old father of the second century made to the hierarchy of Pagan Rome, *Tollatur lex, ut fiat certamen* ; Take away your persecuting edicts that we may fairly try the matter out with argument. Let governments simply stand one side and leave religion free, and truth asks no other advantage ; and this will become the case as fast as the people become the government. A true popular representation cannot long be deferred in any part of Europe ; and when the masses, so long dispraised by high authorities as a miscellaneous rabble and a swinish multitude, come to understand their rights, then farewell to a despotic and monopolizing hierarchy. The violent cross wind of popular opinion, so long pent up, will blow them transverse out of their seats.

Then may we see

Cowls, hoods and habits, with their wearers tost
And fluttered into rags ; their relics, beads,
Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
The sport of winds ; all these upwhirled aloft
Fly o'er the backside of the world far off.

The backside of the world will be the only place for them.

III. A circumstance of great encouragement in its bearing on the resumed advance of Protestantism in Europe, is the just appreciation of the line of influence along which Protestantism should operate. The Reformation, by an unhappy necessity growing out of the blood-intoxicated ferocity of Rome, assumed everywhere a political complexion. It could hope to survive only in one of two ways: either by the government entering into it, in which case the union of Church and State still existed, only under modified relations; or by its becoming strong enough to set the government at defiance, which gave it the character of faction. In either case it became political. The great question was, Does the sovereign embrace the Reformation? If so the state was Protestant; if otherwise the state remained Catholic.

From this idea of converting governments or majorities, and using them for the legal establishment of Christianity, the Protestant mind is now fully emancipated. The sphere of Christianity is the soul of man; the individual, the family. It is no longer expected to operate as an outward constraint. It is to operate as an inward pervading principle. It is not to come with observation. It is to come by a silent internal efficacy. The truth is to light down unperceived like the dew at thousands of points of contact by the labors of the pastor, the missionary, the colporteur; by the agency of the Bible and of the tract. It is one of those great but simple truths that are richly laden with consequences, that Christianity is truly extended only by the conversion of individual men; that it spreads through the world only by catching from soul to soul.

IV. The actual infidelity of the more intelligent and cultivated classes in Catholic countries is a fact perfectly well known to all persons of any information. This has necessarily resulted from the fact that they have known Christianity only under the form of Romanism. The peasantry, whom the Romish system has kept so long degraded and ignorant, are no doubt pious in their way. But let the European Romanist become a reading, reasoning man, and there is only one result. He becomes an unbeliever. The hard alterna-

tive has been laid upon him of either having no Christianity or taking Christianity in the shape of the Council of Trent. He has rightly judged that such a Gospel was unworthy of God. All that was godlike in him has required him to disown it.

Protestant Christianity he has known of only as the heresy of some foreign States with which he had little sympathy, or as the enthusiasm of a few low people of no consideration, his own countrymen. Of the Bible he has had no knowledge whatever; scarce even of the existence of such a thing. Far the larger part even of the intelligent Catholics of Europe have never seen a Bible.

Now the circumstance of encouragement here is that true Christianity is beginning to present itself in an attitude to command the attention of this influential class of persons. Protestant ministers of learning and eloquence are beginning to shine out like the first stars of the evening. Protestant missionaries are laboring at points of influence. A religious literature is growing up. The Bible is pressing into circulation. The fact cannot longer be shut out that there is something to choose besides the dismal alternative of Romish Christianity or none. We may hope that hereafter serious-minded and inquiring Catholics may reach the Canaan of true religion without wandering or perishing in the wide desert of unbelief.

V. All the great inventions and improvements that signalize the age bear favorably on the progress of Protestantism. Whatever awakens mind extends the popular horizon, or furnishes helps for that multitudinous running to and fro by which knowledge is increased, is an ally of true Christianity. Every such influence is correspondingly dreaded by the rulers of the darkness of this world. "We must kill this printing (said a wise preaching Friar four hundred years ago), or printing will kill us." But friars turned out to have a much less tenacious vitality than types. *Vita brevis, ars longa.* The art killed off the ecclesiastic. It has been sapping at the foundations of the whole Hierarchal system from that time onwards; and various other influences have come in from time to time, preëminently in our own day, to help on the

inevitable result. The great names that should be particularly hateful to the Papacy are not those commonly identified with the beginning and progress of the Reformation. It has been the inventors, the explorers, the men who have facilitated travel and the interchange of thought, who have shaken the Roman system into a wreck. It has been Guttenberg and De Gama; Fulton, and Stevenson, and Morse; the men who multiply books, who bring distant regions into near neighborhood, who pour light into the darkness that has proved so friendly to Romanism. Popular ignorance, and priestly rule, and steam presses, locomotives, and telegraphs, are deadly antagonisms; and since the last can't very well be destroyed, it seems altogether likely the first must.

It has been in the times passing immediately under our own eyes that these agents of Protestantism have begun to invade the Catholic States of Europe. Liberty of preaching, and printing, and travelling, are strangers of the freshest introduction into Popedom. Once introduced they infallibly go forward like the man with the iron flail, and beat down whatever either the priest or the magistrate has erected to curb human progress.

VI. The power of prayer is enlisted to an unprecedented extent for the success of Christianity in its bearing on the Romish system. I know there is special prayer too for the conversion of Protestants; but it is prayer to one who though blessed among women is neither queen nor mediator, and who is dishonored by the idolatries of which she is made the object. The prayer that goes up without ceasing for vengeance on the blood-stained harlot of Rome, and for the deliverance of God's own elect who may still be entangled in her net, is prayer which fulfils the conditions of success. It is built on a promise. It is offered in the name of the sole mediator. It goes up therefore in faith. For much of the time since the Reformation the Romish Church has been almost exclusively an object of fear and of hatred. Luther whose heart yearned over his countrymen still blinded by the sorceries of Rome could not say his prayers without turning each petition into a curse against the Papacy.

We are permitted to cherish somewhat different sentiments. As the fear has subsided the pity has increased; and while looking for nothing but the signal overthrow of the system, and the ruin of the large body of those who have the mark of the beast in their foreheads, there has been a more earnest disposition to have compassion on others making a difference, and pulling them out of the fire.

The conspicuous punishment of the Anti-Christian Church of Rome is believed to be as clearly revealed in the Scriptures as any future event whatever. The time was when that synagogue of Satan was still, though corrupted, a Church of Christ, and might, humanly speaking, have been reformed. This might have been, for instance, in the sixth or seventh century, before the Bishop of Rome assumed to be in terms autocrat of universal Christendom. It might have been in the eighth and ninth centuries, when Charlemagne with his ubiquitous energy infused such new life into what was fast becoming a mere dead shell of formalism. Why might she not have been reformed throughout at the beginning of the sixteenth century, as she was reformed in part? It is true that her doom was written by the pen of inspiration long before; but there was a contingency in this as in every other case which made the predestinated ruin depend on an obdurate persistency in wickedness. So Nineveh was doomed, and yet repented and was spared. So Jerusalem was doomed, and yet had a day of visitation when she might have known the things that belonged to her peace; and so mystical Babylon was doomed, and yet might have been healed if she would, before the day of her visitation passed away.

I regard that day as having closed at the Council of Trent. Deeply as she had corrupted the simplicity of the Gospel, and crimsoned as she was with the blood of the saints, it may be that the times of this ignorance God would have winked at. The crimes and corruptions of the long mediæval night might have been forgiven. A new light had now dawned on the world. The Scriptures were circulated. The Gospel stood forth revealed. The characteristic doctrines and usages of the Romish Church though well ascertained were not so fixed that the Council of Trent might not have changed

them. A strong tendency to radical reforms manifested itself in the council. Bishops and Cardinals, backed by leading Catholic Princes, demanded marriage for the clergy, vernacular translations and the cup for the people; the establishment of schools for the poor; plain, familiar catechisms, congregational singing, the mass in the vulgar tongue, and a preaching ministry.

These were sweeping reforms to ask. Their concession would no doubt have left much still to do; but it would have set the Romish Church much farther along the path of reform than the English Church was at the death of Henry the Eighth. Other changes would have naturally followed, divesting the Romish communion still more of its Anti-Christian and idolatrous character; and she might now have been like the English Church in a regular process of amelioration towards a simpler and a purer Christianity. But this was not to be. At Trent the Church of Rome with her eyes open chose imposture and idolatry as her portion. Thenceforward her character is unchangeably fixed; till Christ who is even now consuming her by the breath of His mouth shall signally destroy her by the brightness of his coming. *We would have healed Babylon but she is not healed; forsake her and let us go every one to his own country; for her judgment reacheth unto Heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies.*

Lastly. The loss of the Pope's sovereignty, which seems now to be a "*fixed fact*," may probably draw after it consequences which will leave Rome itself a monument of God's revenge against the Papacy. The older Protestant commentators express the expectation that Italy itself, undermined with volcanoes, and heaving on an ocean of lava, will one day sink like a millstone and disappear.

So when the years shall have revolved the date
The inevitable hour of Naples' fate,
Her sapped foundations shall with thunder shake,
And heave and toss upon the sulphurous lake;
Earth's womb at once the fiery flood shall rend
And in the abyss her plunging towers descend.

But not to prophecy for Rome the sudden catastrophe which Gay anticipated for Naples, there are well known phy-